
CONSENT

Bill No: AB 920
Author: Caloza (D), et al.
Amended: 7/7/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE: 7-0, 7/2/25
AYES: Durazo, Choi, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Laird, Seyarto, Wiener

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 10-0, 7/15/25
AYES: Wahab, Seyarto, Arreguín, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez,
Grayson, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla
NO VOTE RECORDED: Cabaldon

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 5/19/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Permit Streamlining Act: housing development projects: centralized application portal

SOURCE: Abundant Housing LA

DIGEST: This bill requires a city or county with a population of 150,000 or more persons to, no later than January 1, 2028, establish a centralized application portal for housing development projects online.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Allows, pursuant to the California Constitution, cities and counties to “make and enforce within its limits, all local, police, sanitary and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws.” It is from this fundamental power (commonly called the police power) that cities and counties derive their

authority to regulate behavior to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the public—including land use authority.

- 2) Establishes, under the Mitigation Fee Act, specific requirements a city must follow in establishing or imposing development fees and sets forth a process by which a developer may challenge the imposition of a fee.
- 3) Requires a city, county, or special district (as applicable) to post on its website specified information including: a current schedule of mitigation fees, exactions, and affordability requirements applicable to a housing development project; all zoning ordinances and development standards; the current and five previous annual fee reports or annual financial reports; and an archive of impact fee nexus studies, cost of service studies, or equivalent, as specified. Requires this information to be updated within 30 days of any changes.
- 4) Pursuant to the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (SB 330, (Skinner, Chapter 654, Statutes of 2019) prohibits a local agency from applying new rules or standards to a project after a preliminary application containing specified information is submitted. The local agency must also make any required determinations on whether a project site is a historic site when a complete preliminary application is filed.
- 5) Requires local agencies to exhaustively list all information needed to make a development application complete under the Permit Streamlining Act, limits that list to only those items on the checklist for application required by state law, and prohibits the local agency from requiring additional information. The checklist information must also be posted online.

This bill:

- 1) Requires a city or county with a population of 150,000 or more to, no later than January 1, 2028, make a centralized application portal available on its website to applicants for housing development projects. The population shall be determined based on the population of persons in the unincorporated areas of the county.
- 2) Authorizes a city or county, notwithstanding (1), to make a centralized application portal available on its website no later than January 1, 2030 if it does both of the following prior to January 1, 2028:
- 3) Makes a written finding that it would need to substantially increase permitting fees in order to make a centralized portal available.

- 4) Initiates a procurement process to make a centralized portal available on its website.
- 5) Requires the centralized portal to allow for tracking of the status of an application.
- 6) Provides that a city or county shall not be required to provide the status of any permit or inspection required by another local agency, a state agency, or a utility provider.

Background

Zoning and approval processes. Local governments use their police power to enact zoning ordinances that establish the types of land uses that are allowed or authorized in an area. Zoning ordinances often identify a primary use for parcels in the area, as well as other uses that are allowed if they meet conditions imposed by the local government. They also set the standards and conditions that development must comply with in order to proceed.

Local governments have broad authority to define the specific approval processes needed to satisfy these considerations. Some housing projects can be permitted by city or county planning staff “ministerially” or without further approval from elected officials, but most large housing projects require “discretionary” approvals from local governments, such as a conditional use permit or a change in zoning laws. This process requires hearings by the local planning commission and public notice and may require additional approvals.

Application portals. Cities and counties across the state have access to software to create portals on their websites for applications related to the development, improvement, or repair of a housing development project. These portals can be helpful when a city or county has multiple departments working on an application. For example, Santa Barbara has moved to an all-digital application and plan review platform. Sacramento County uses the same software for their application portal. In contrast, the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety hosts a portal where Los Angeles can issue an express permit where work does not require any type of plan review or approval. In its information bulletin P/GI 2020-003 as it was last revised on April 20, 2022, the City of Los Angeles outlines the types of building, HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, electrical, elevators, pressure vessel, or other permits eligible to be reviewed through the online portal.

Abundant Housing LA wants the Legislature to make it easier for developers to submit applications for housing.

Comments

Purpose of this bill. According to the author, “California is in a housing and affordability crisis. A universal lack of technology to track housing permits is one of the major challenges facing local governments and housing providers when it comes to fast-tracking housing projects. Physically contacting, emailing, or calling simply can’t support the current volume of permit applications and local governments do not have the ability to meet future population demands. Current development approval processes are slow, complex, and largely flawed. AB 920 takes a meaningful step towards ensuring transparency and accountability in addressing our housing crisis.”

Who’s in? Eight counties currently have a population of greater than 150,000: Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, and San Diego. Additionally, 37 cities are covered by this bill. However, it is unclear which, if any, of these jurisdictions do not currently have a portal that meets the requirements of this bill.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/19/25)

Abundant Housing LA (source)
California Apartment Association
California Council for Affordable Housing
California Housing Consortium
California Yimby
Circulate San Diego
Fieldstead and Company, INC.
Habitat for Humanity California
Inner City Law Center
Institute for Responsive Government Action
Leadingage California
Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis
South Pasadena Residents for Responsible Growth
Spur
The Two Hundred

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/19/25)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0, 5/19/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Dixon, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Papan

Prepared by: Anton Favorini-Csorba / L. GOV. / (916) 651-4119
8/21/25 16:45:35

**** END ****